

SHIRLEY CHISHOLM

*First African-American woman elected to the
U.S. House of Representatives*



In 1968, Chisholm became the first black woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Chisholm was born in Brooklyn to immigrant parents and graduated from Brooklyn College. She taught nursery school and directed

two daycare centers, and earned a master's degree in elementary education from Columbia University in 1952. In 1964, she was elected to the New York State Assembly. Four years later, Chisholm was elected by a two-to-one margin to Congress, and eventually served seven terms. She was instrumental in creating the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for women, infants, and children and was a founding member of both the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Women's Caucus. In 1972, Chisholm became the first black major-party candidate to run for president and the first woman to run for the Democratic Party Nomination. In 2015, she was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.